

something like a general agreement appeared upon the question of a double tunnel, while the chief surveyor and four others took up the same idea of a single tunnel. Therefore, he thought that not more than four or five classes need be formed, to which they should refer the leading principles to be kept in view. He denied that any foregone conclusion had been come to upon this subject, as he believed that one of the most eminent engineers in the country would not adopt the plan of either the consulting surveyor or of the chief engineer. As to the delay that they appeared to have fallen into, in fifty-six statements sent in, and particularly those advocating two tunnels, they appeared to have wholly neglected one of the greatest difficulties, and that was, let the tunnel be where it might, with an intermittent supply of water, what would be the proportion of the deposit; for if they constructed tunnels, there could be no doubt that in the lapse of years they would be filled up. In the scheme of one tunnel the same difficulty would exist, though in a greater proportion. Such being the state of the matter, where they had so much to learn, he thought they might be pardoned if they asked for more time, as there were other considerations than the mere relief of London by a certain canal.

Mr. Alderman Lawrence thought no classification should be made by the Court, but that they should leave that question unincumbered to persons who were practically acquainted with the subject, who would themselves classify them if such a course was considered necessary. He trusted that all parties would receive fair play, especially as he found great diuision in the board, and their decisions were guided by the influence of majority against minority. Let the plans be good, bad, or indifferent, he was for referring them to gentlemen of known skill and experience.

The Chairman said their position reminded him of the story of the man that prayed to Jupiter for wealth, his request was granted, and he was overwhelmed in the shower of it. They were not exactly overwhelmed, but they would have some difficulty in extricating themselves from the mass, and selecting such portions as they might deem valuable. He thought the most judicious course would be the one that had been suggested.

After a few words from Mr. Norris, Mr. Chadwick said his opinions on this subject had been fully set forth in official documents, to which he had set his name. Long since he had pressed two plans on the consideration of the court, to bring these principles in issue; and so far from dictating, or taking any undue position, his object had been to place facts before the commissioners, without any pre-conceived opinions on his part. He had wished them to delay their decisions until their trial-works were in a fit stage for them to decide; and he was strongly of opinion that they should decide no general plans until the two surveys were completed. If he had any pre-conceived opinions, they were directed—first, to the purification of the house, which formed at least two-thirds of their work; the next, to purifying the street; and lastly, the river. Great misrepresentations had been made out of doors as to the state of feeling in the court, and what had been done. He admitted that there had been great delays, but at the same time he felt assured that a most important progress had been made over those acts of any previous commission.

Mr. R. L. Jones said; certainly the greatest divisions existed in the court,—for what was agreed to by one court was rescinded by another; they had no principle laid down as to house drainage, or the difference that should be made between a large house and a small one; in fact, nothing was done but on the bit-by-bit system. These evils had been brought upon them, he believed, by splitting up the court into sections by the formation of committees.

Several commissioners addressed the court, and the following resolutions were put and agreed to unanimously:—

"That the author of each plan received since the 20th August be required to send in, by the 17th of October, a concise statement of what he considers the main features, whether in principle or detail.

"That the statements so sent in be printed for the consideration of the commissioners as early as practicable.

"That within fourteen days after the completion of the printing and circulation of the concise statements, a special court be summoned to consider of the proceedings which it may be proper to take for deciding upon them, in conformity with the previous resolutions of the court.

"That such persons who send in plans shall, on receipt of such plans, be entitled to receive back the amount paid for sections and particulars."

The court, on this question, was then adjourned *sine die*.

THE ARCHITECTURAL ASSOCIATION begin their season with a *conversazione* this (Friday) evening, the 5th inst., at their rooms, Lyon's Inn Hall, Strand.

METROPOLITAN COMMISSION OF SEWERS.

A GENERAL Court was held on Thursday, at the Court-house, Greek-street; Sir John Burgoyne, R.E., in the chair.

A letter was received from Mr. Bell, chemist, complaining of the state of the drainage of Great Portland-street, one death having recently occurred there from cholera, and at the present time the smells were so offensive, that the worst results were anticipated, unless a remedy was immediately applied by trapping the gullies, such work to be done at the expense of the commission. The application, on the recommendation of the Works' Committee, was agreed to.

*Sewage Manure for Hyde-park.* It was agreed that permission be given to Mr. Mann, superintendent of Hyde-park, to sink, at his own expense, a well to receive a portion of the sewage from the sewer running through Hyde-park, for the purpose of pumping and using it for manuring the park.

*Use of Sewage Manure in Agriculture.*—The following letter was read by Mr. Woolrych, the clerk:—

"Weald Hall, Brentwood, Sept. 29, 1849.

"Gentlemen,—In consequence of the invitation of landholders within 50 miles of London, in reference to the application of sewage manure, I obtained the inspection of a portion of my estate by Mr. Donaldson. Never having received any information of the result of that inspection from your board, I conceived it had been given up. As, however, I perceive from a report in the *Times* of Friday last that I am in error, I lose no time in declining further treaty for it. The late ravages of cholera in the lowlands and banks of rivers have led me more to appreciate the healthiness of these hills, where happily no cases of that pestilence have yet shown themselves. I fear the importation of such wholesale floods of London sewage, charged with noxious gases, especially if deposited in an open reservoir sufficiently extensive to admit of a supply to reach Crouch river, and which, according to Mr. Baker's calculations per acre, must be enormous, would be beyond the power of every deodorizing fluid yet discovered. Of the value of sewage manure to meadow land there can be no doubt, but the opinion of so experienced an agriculturist as Mr. Robert Baker leads me to question its applicability to the wet arable lands of Essex in the direction proposed.—I am, gentlemen, yours, obediently.

W. TOWER.

E. R. Woolrych, Esq."

The letter was laid upon the table, but no conversation took place upon the subject.

*The Explosion of the Sewer in Friar-street.*—A letter was received from Messrs. Cadin and Co., soap-makers, on the subject of the recent explosion of a sewer in Friar-street.—Mr. Leslie said he had intended to move the abolition of the Trial Works Committee, but was induced, at the request of Lord Carlisle, to postpone that motion until the Committee had made their report. That report had not appeared, but they had one notwithstanding on Saturday last, in the shape of an explosion in the sewer in Friar-street. On hearing of it, he (Mr. Leslie) sent for Mr. Medworth, to ascertain if he knew anything of the works done there, but he denied that there was any truth in it; and Mr. Grant, the district surveyor, denied the story in toto, in the presence of Mr. Hatton and two other officers, Mr. Grant adding that at this period of the year the newspapers were glad to get anything they could. Not satisfied, however, from the circumstantial account which appeared of the transaction, he made further inquiries, and it turned out that one of the officers had gone on Saturday night, on his own responsibility, and had blown up the sewer. He thought, therefore, that if there was then any objection to stop the Trial Works Committee, there could be none now. It appeared that they had made a communication from the ash-pit of the steam-engine of Thorne's brewery with this foul sewer. Such a process he considered hazardous. If damage occurred, and the factory were blown up, who was to pay the expenses of the policies of insurance—certainly not the fire offices. He therefore hoped they would now and at once stop the further proceedings of the Trial Works Committee. Notwithstanding the commission was stated to be on its last legs, he hoped they should, at any rate, die with something like decency.—Mr. Murray justified the Trial Works Committee.

Mr. Grant, anticipating some observations might be made upon this subject, had drawn up a report, which he would now read. It stated that the reports that had appeared of this circumstance were of a very exaggerated and incorrect character. From the state of this sewer, he suggested that Mr. Gurney's mode of ventilation should be tried. Mr. Cooper and other parties were consulted on the subject, and a pipe was attached from the sewer to the ash-pit of a furnace. The draught was very great, and for some time the experiment went on satisfactorily, but the stone-ware pipe nearest the furnace became very hot, and showed symptoms of cracking. To ascertain the effect of the air of the

sewer at the side entrance, a lantern was let down and the air inflamed, which operation was repeated, after which, when the men were closing the flap, it was suddenly carried with a jerk like the blasting of a quarry, the inflamed gas escaping suddenly, and slightly injuring one of the men who was standing at the entrance. Simultaneously the inflamed gas being drawn in to the furnace, the stone-ware pipe, which had been getting hotter, suddenly burst, and the door of the ash-pit, which had been hanging loose, was thrown off. This was the whole extent of the explosion. It further stated that no one but himself was responsible, as he did not consult either of the chief officers, nor did he do it by order of any commissioner. He also mentioned various places where similar experiments had been tried with success; and in support of his view, quoted the opinion of Mr. Faraday contained in the first report of the Metropolitan Sanitary Commission, in which he stated that "I have often thought that the many furnace and engine fires that rise up so abundantly in London might be made to compensate in part for the miasma which their smoke occasions by being turned to account in ventilating the sewers and burning the putrid vapours generated therein."

—A long and rather disorderly debate ensued on this question, which was terminated by the adoption of the following resolutions:—

"That the court approve of the course taken by Mr. Grant, in reference to the sewer in Friar-street, having consulted the best available authorities, and that the expenses be paid."—"That the Trial Works Committee be instructed to report on the subject of such ventilation, and that an early day after its receipt be appointed for the consideration of the said report."

A long conversation took place on the improper use of candles in the sewers.—Mr. Leslie contending that the Davy lamp should invariably be used, as various accidents had arisen from the neglect; which view was supported by Dr. Southwood Smith.—It was ordered that the use of the Davy lamp should be strictly insisted upon for the future.

Some works were then ordered, and the court adjourned.

MISCELLANEA.

CARPENTERS' HALL, LONDON-WALL.—Alderman Lawrence, one of the new sheriffs, being on the Court of the Carpenters' Company, the sheriffs' inauguration dinner was given in the old hall, which has not been used for such a purpose for many years. We have before now spoken of this building; it appears to have been acquired by the company in the year 1428, and in the following year a "Great Hall" was built by them. Whether any part of the original hall be still standing, cannot be ascertained; but the records of the Carpenters' Company, which (with the exception of a few years during a portion of the reign of Henry VIII.) present an unbroken series of the accounts of the company since the year 1438, contain no notice of the subsequent erection of any hall, though they include constant entries of disbursements for extensive repairs and additions. The present hall, therefore, if not built in the reign of Henry VI. (1429), must, at least, be as ancient as that of Henry VIII. Little of the original work, however, is to be seen. The interesting mural paintings here, discovered in 1845, will be remembered by our readers.

BURIAL IN TOWNS.—The Board of Health have, unfortunately, been beaten in their righteous endeavours to save the lives of the community by the suppression of this nuisance. Under the 9th clause of the Nuisances Act they summoned the proprietors of the Whitfield Chapel graveyard, in Tottenham-court-road, before Mr. Jardine, for resisting their order to discontinue the nuisance; but the insufficiency of the clause induced the judge to dismiss the summons, while, at the same time, he confessed the propriety of the Board's intention. We trust that even in the mean time, however, this will prove no check to the vigorous procedure of all in power with those other general measures requisite to the health and life of the community. Fity it were not the modern practice, as it was the more sensible practice of the ancients, to burn or embalm all the putrid matter of the dead. As for measures of general cleansing, the time for that now approaches. The danger of opening cesspools, &c., has crippled all endeavours, hitherto, while the plague raged, and the canals of fith below the level of the Thames on the south side have done their dreadful work without the least qualification or mercy. Something now, however, must be done.